

*Mar. 24 / Administration of George Bush, 1992*

ronmental concerns such as deforestation and potential climate change, which also have profound long-term implications. The year ahead will test our ability to redefine the relationship between humanity and the environment—and in so doing, to secure a

greater peace and prosperity for generations to come. We must not fail that test.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,  
March 24, 1992.

## Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the Open Skies Treaty *March 24, 1992*

Today the United States, along with Canada and 22 European nations, signed the Treaty on Open Skies in Helsinki, Finland.

In May of 1989, at a time when the immense changes seen in Europe over the past 3 years were just beginning, President Bush proposed that the nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the former Warsaw Pact agree to open their territories to frequent overflights by observation aircraft from the other side. The United States believes that the greater transparency in military activities brought about by such an agreement will help reduce the chances of military confrontation and build confidence in the peaceful intentions of the participating States.

The Open Skies Treaty is the most wide-ranging international confidence-building regime ever developed, covering the entire territory of North America and nearly all

of Europe and the former Soviet Union. Its arrangements for observation flights using photographic, radar, and infrared sensors and its provisions for sharing among participants the information gathered are innovative means to help promote openness and stability in Europe in these uncertain times. Open Skies could also serve as a basis for similar arrangements in other regions of the world where there is a need to build confidence.

The treaty establishes an Open Skies Consultative Commission. In early April it will convene in Vienna, Austria, to complete work on outstanding technical and cost issues regarding treaty implementation. The treaty will be submitted to the United States Senate for its advice and consent to ratification once this work is finished to the satisfaction of all participants.

## Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on Diplomatic Relations With the Republic of Georgia

*March 24, 1992*

The President has decided that the United States will take immediate steps to establish diplomatic relations with Georgia. The United States had recognized Georgian independence on December 25, 1991. In recent weeks, the new Georgian Government has taken steps to restore civilian rule, begin a dialog on national reconciliation, and committed itself to holding parliamentary elections this year. On the basis of these actions and following communications

between the leader of the Georgian State Council, Eduard Shevardnadze, and Secretary of State James Baker on the political, economic, and security principles of most importance to the United States, the President believes that U.S. interests will be best served by having diplomatic ties with the Georgian Government. The depth, extent, and richness of U.S. relations with Georgia will depend on the Georgian Government's commitment to these principles.